

Sponsored by  
Foggy Bottom Association (FBA), Dupont Circle Citizens Association (DCCA),  
Foggy Bottom/West End ANC 2A, Dupont Circle ANC 2B and  
The D.C. Library Renaissance Project (DCLRP)

# WEST END COMMUNITY VISIONING SESSIONS

*March 12, 2008 and March 15, 2008*



**Report compiled by: Robin Diener, Executive Director, The D.C. Library Renaissance Project; Elizabeth B. Elliott, Executive Board Member, Foggy Bottom Association; and Richard Layman, Independent Planning and Preservation Consultant**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A consensus exists that public assets in West End public hold the once-in-a-lifetime potential to achieve broad, lasting and sustainable public benefits through real economic development. The community collaboration on the highly successful Columbia Hospital for Women mixed-use residential and retail complex is a model process for achieving what the community seeks.

Rather than look at each of the sites/projects included in our sessions on a piecemeal basis— independent of one another and broader changes within the community—the session organizers recommended that these projects be considered holistically and simultaneously. They wanted residents and stakeholders to create a snapshot of how they viewed our public assets. Do they, or could they, connect and relate to each other? In the context of amenities and public services offered *in toto* within the West End, how they are performing from a user/owner perspective? How can these public facilities help the community achieve long-range public policy goals by contributing to the strengthening and expansion of neighborhood livability?

Following are preliminary considerations growing out of the sessions:

### **1. West End Branch Library (Square 37):**

- New library facility: site, details, and phasing as well as provision of interim facility during construction phase to be determined
- Consider leasing of additional development rights on adjoining property
- Support DCLRP Symposium on homelessness and libraries scheduled for Fall 2008

### **2. Metropolitan Police Department's Special Operations Division (Square 37):**

- Possible co-location with new Engine Company #1 FEMS facility
- Consider workforce housing for MPD employees

### **3. Fire Engine Company No. 1 (Square 50):**

- New, expanded FEMS facility at current location
- Work with Homeland Security and community to obtain full federal funding to construct and support the entire program demanded of this location
- Consider workforce housing for FEMS employees

**4. Stevens Elementary School (Square 73):**

- Community wants educational facility in restored historic landmark
- Stevens parents have vested interest in project
- Consider leasing of additional development rights for multi-use facility
- Consider keeping Stevens open until new or retrofitted Francis facility completed
- Consider findings from C.E. Gove thesis project on Stevens School (University of Maryland 2006 Master of Architecture)<sup>1</sup> in organizing a new program for Stevens

**5. Francis Junior High School and the adjacent Francis Recreation Center (Square 23)**

- Community wants state-of-the-art educational facility
- Francis parents have vested interest in project
- Consider leasing of additional development rights for multi-use facility (education, housing, office)
- Gove thesis also relevant

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<sup>1</sup> Thesis: *A New Life for Stevens Elementary School and its Neighbors*. Abstract: A powerful school environment unites an entire community. This thesis addresses ways to bring together neighborhoods; in particular to strengthen the relationship between the child and the city. This thesis program explores a new school model where the existing infrastructure of historic schools is used as the core of a new community center within the school. In addition to the historical school, program elements to help foster new growth on the site for the school and community include outdoor play areas, a gymnasium, theatre, and library. URL: <https://drum.umd.edu/dspace/handle/1903/3639>

## **CURRENT CONDITIONS**

The West End is located between Downtown and Georgetown, and between George Washington University and Dupont Circle, and is served by the GWU-Foggy Bottom subway station. Frequent bus service is provided along Pennsylvania Avenue, and most people live within a ¾ mile walk to the Farragut North and Dupont Circle Metro stations.

Because of its location—sandwiched between the Dupont neighborhood on the north, Georgetown on the west, GWU on the south, and an extensively built-out downtown and Central Business District on the east—the West End neighborhood has always faced development pressures. While a few vestiges of the old Foggy Bottom/West End working class neighborhood remain, most of the built environment has been demolished and reconstructed over the past few decades. More density and greater intensity of use is evidenced by the presence of numerous larger/taller buildings for housing, hotels, and office-commercial use. Today, M Street NW is the location of many high-end hotels, and the areas surrounding M Street are now almost exclusively comprised of larger buildings, with numerous structures reaching the maximum 130 feet.

The resurgence of the housing and office markets in Washington over the past few years has only intensified this pressure on the neighborhood because of its accessible location. At the same time, the redevelopment of the Columbia Hospital for Women, the Atlas and the Sovereign in the 2400 block of M Street have brought more residents to the neighborhood, helping to strengthen its residential character.

The West End neighborhood contains many public facilities and assets. Sites owned by the D.C. Government include the West End Branch Library, the Metropolitan Police Department's Special Operations Division headquarters, Fire Engine Company No. 1, Stevens Elementary School (historically landmarked), Francis Junior High School, and the related Francis Recreation Center (abutting Rock Creek Park). Washington Circle—separating the West End from the GW campus on the south—is a federal reservation controlled by the National Park Service.

Separately, the National Park Service is scheduled to repair and reconstruct parts of Washington Circle, and a large (830,000+ square feet) mixed-use development has been approved by the Zoning Commission for Square 54, the former location of the GWU Hospital. As mentioned above, the redevelopment of the Columbia Hospital for Women has brought more housing and

retail to the neighborhood. The retail includes a supermarket, Trader Joe's (garnered in large part through a \$1.12 million incentive payment by the Foggy Bottom Association—not the District Government—to the company), District Hardware and Bike Shop (which moved from its long-time location on P Street), and a Day Spa. Additionally, other developments in West End have attracted several Starbucks, a 24-hour CVS, the first D.C. Walgreens, dry-cleaners, sandwich shops and other neighborhood-serving retail.

## **PUBLIC PROPERTY ASSETS**

Over the past 24 months, there has been a flurry of interest, activity, and discussion amongst many DC Government agencies, elected officials, non-profit and community organizations, and for-profit developers with regard to these five West End sites:

- the West End Library is a facility that enjoys high circulation, has a very engaged “Library Friends” group yet has many facilities issues and a homeless problem, which is not unique to that branch. It is scheduled to be one of the last buildings renovated as part of the DC Public Library facilities improvement capital plan;
- the Metropolitan Police Department has been planning new offices, which could lead to the de-accessioning of the Special Operations Division facility located on L Street NW next to the library;
- the building housing FEMS Engine Company No. 1 was built in the early 1960s and is inadequate as a 21<sup>st</sup>-Century mission-critical facility. As Fire Engine Co. No. 1 is the scheduled first response FEMS facility for the White House and the primary federal interest area, there should be considerable support for strengthening this facility—support that is currently absent—by the federal government,;
- Stevens Elementary School is slated to be closed at the end of spring semester. Stevens possesses a high degree of historicity as the building was the first public school constructed (1868) specifically for DC's African-American school children, and it served as one of the anchors of a long-time African-American community in Foggy Bottom/West End;
- Francis Junior High School—which is technically included within the Dupont ANC but is actually located on the north side of the N Street boundary between ANC 2A and ANC 2B—is slated to receive the elementary grades currently located at Stevens combined into a newly offered K-8 program. Francis is to be renovated/retrofitted for elementary school

children for classes starting in September 2008. (For purposes of this report, the recreation center/pool and playing fields adjacent to the school will be considered part of the complex.)

## **COMMUNITY VISIONING PROCESS**

The Foggy Bottom Association (FBA), the Dupont Circle Citizens Association (DCCA), the ANCs for both communities, and the D.C. Library Renaissance Project (DCLRP) came together in July 2007 to protest emergency legislation passed by Council covering three of the five above-cited projects. Both communities are jointly served by the West End Branch Library and the MPD Special Operations Division, both located on Square 37, and Fire & Emergency Service Engine Co. No. 1 located approximately a block to a block and a half away on Square 50.

In response to public outcry, the Council—led by Ward 2 Council member Jack Evans—rescinded the emergency legislation in October of 2007. The groups convened an initial co-sponsored community meeting in late November to gather input from residents of Dupont and Foggy Bottom-West End and to determine how to proceed. [In an independent and ongoing effort, the West End Library Friends (WELF) had held a facilitated public meeting on the library earlier in November and had announced its WE library users' survey. A representative from the WELF Stakeholders Committee presented a short synopsis and announced the launch of a 3-month survey of Library users and non-users.]

In early 2008, the Foggy Bottom/West End ANC 2A and Dupont Circle ANC 2B each passed a joint resolution calling for a formal planning process, specifically focused on the Square 37 properties.

The FBA, DCCA, ANC 2A, ANC 2B, and DCLRP then initiated planning for a set of community visioning workshops as a follow-on to the November meeting. Both sessions were convened by representatives of the community groups and their respective ANCs and held at the West End Library. Robin Diener, Executive Director of the D.C. Library Renaissance Project, and Elizabeth Elliott, FBA Executive Board member, organized the sessions which were conducted by Richard Layman, a citizen advocacy planner and consultant involved in neighborhood and city-wide planning initiatives in DC and elsewhere. Other stakeholders participating in the sessions included the West End Library Friends group, the Office of Ward 2 Council member Jack Evans,

the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, and other District agencies. These sessions were held on Wednesday evening March 12th from 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm and Saturday March 15th from 10:00 am-2:00 pm.

Wednesday evening session. This session was organized as a “SWOT” (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis focused on the qualities of great neighborhoods, specifically the West End. LIKES and NEEDS were identified in a set of exercises involving the entire group. A brief summary of the results from the user survey conducted by the West End Library Friends group was presented. Between 30 and 40 people attended this session.

Saturday session. The “likes” and “needs” lists produced in the Wednesday session were posted on the walls. During the morning portion of the session, attendees reviewed these lists, adding to and expanding on the points and categories previously identified. At the end of the first part of the session, more detailed results of West End Library Friends survey were delivered by WELF President Susan Haight. Dupont resident David Mallof presented an extensive list of community findings about the facility and program for Engine Company No. 1.

After a short break for refreshments, the afternoon session participants separated into two subgroups. One group focused on identifying “macro” or broad principles and values that the community would like to have in place to guide community development going forward. The second group focused on developing “micro” principles, encompassing community values and program needs for each public site/facility. At the conclusion of the afternoon session, each group presented their findings.

### **List of likes and needs**

Appendix 1 is the compilation of the results of the Wednesday evening session, as amended by the addition of comments provided in the opening portion of the Saturday session. The comments were organized into categories and combined (or repeated) and edited as appropriate. No content was discarded. The categories are:

- People & Place
- Nature & Green Space
- Transportation & Mobility



- Public Services
- Public Safety
- Cultural Assets
- Library
- George Washington University
- Planning & Zoning
- Housing
- Retail
- Civic Engagement/City Governance
- Spiritual.

A number of needs were identified, including more active street and sidewalks, a focus on providing services to the homeless (to improve conditions for homeless individuals and to reduce the negative impacts on the community), and the lack of a clear and well-defined center for the West End community.

### **Report of the Macro Group on principles to guide community and physical development in the West End neighborhood**

Participants identified 10 principles, with five (listed first) grouped together as concerns about urban design and placemaking. The full report is presented in Appendix 2.

1. Multi-use facilities that include community/incubator/meeting spaces;
2. Improved outdoor spaces that are attractive and give people places to meet, thus building community and connections;
3. Livelier streets;
4. Improved pedestrian safety;
5. Need for development/re-development of public facilities to be green, sustainable and “smart,” creating “model” and “demonstration” buildings, parks, and streetscapes;
6. More residential housing;

7. Public agencies should lease our public real estate assets rather than selling to or swapping with private parties (Sumner School model/GW model<sup>2</sup>); among many possibilities, rent revenue could provide funding stream to support community services;
8. Better manage the area's homeless population;
9. Provide shelters in case of disaster (such as 9/11) given proximity to White House and other federal institutions;
10. Additional parking for visitors.

### **Report of the Micro Group**

The group discussion laid out eight broad principles and then added specific considerations for each of the public properties located in the West End. (The group also made recommendations about Roosevelt Island, located within the Potomac River and Ward 2, but not in the West End. Roosevelt Island is accessible only from Virginia) The full report is listed in Appendix 3.

#### **Overarching Principles:**

1. Everything should be as “green” and green as possible;
2. We need moderate income housing;
3. Publicly-owned properties are very valuable, and utilization of these properties by for-profit entities should fund both new facilities and ongoing programs offered in those facilities (post-construction/redevelopment);
4. We would like to see a white paper on the benefits of leasing the property to a developer compared to selling it outright. After consideration of such an analysis, residents and stakeholders will be better prepared and able to take a position on the possible disposition of publicly owned assets located within the neighborhood.
5. All public facilities should stay public.
6. Get the best return for the neighborhood from the utilization of public assets for profit-making purposes.

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<sup>2</sup> Rather than sell the property, the Sumner School model is a lease agreement whereby the DC Public School System agreed to the construction of a new office building on the playground of Sumner School for a 99-year term. Included in the agreement was the rehabilitation of the Sumner School as an archives and meeting facility for DCPS. The cost of the rehabilitation, as well as the maintenance of the building throughout the term of the lease, is covered by the lessee as conditions of the overall agreement.

7. Homeless should have day care and night care somewhere in Ward 2, **homeless mitigation on Square 37 is absolutely essential.**
8. Through a focused and prioritized community benefits process, developers should provide endowments/trusts to maintain and fund public assets that may otherwise be displaced, e.g., the library.

## **REMAINING QUESTIONS**

A number of questions came up during the preliminary session and in discussions and analysis during the two Community Visioning workshop sessions. Many participants were very focused on solutions—rather than broader approaches—and wanted specific recommendations to come out of the process to guide community residents, organizations, stakeholders, elected and appointed officials, and DC government agencies.

A close reading of the Appendices will demonstrate that specific recommendations were produced. However, it's fair to say that questions and opportunities remain and require further consideration. This is not a surprise as the sessions totaled about 7 hours, and it takes a bit longer than that to “plan a neighborhood.” A lot of ground was covered in a short period of time, and the participants were up to the challenge, producing strong and thorough guidelines going forward that will be useful for both residents and stakeholders. Participants are to be congratulated for the quality of the results that they produced and thanked for the amount of time they contributed to this effort.

## **FURTHER CONSIDERATION**

### **Transportation and Parking**

- DDOT ward planners did not participate in the visioning sessions, and many of the needs and threats expressed are matters for DDOT. Mobility patterns were only touched upon—*e.g.* M Street could be a two-way street east of New Hampshire Avenue, and wider sidewalks would be desirable.
- Many streets in the West End are traffic bottlenecks during the workweek. This will only worsen with the development already in the works.

- There is a need for mitigation and much more coordination between city agencies to take advantage of multi-modal transportation<sup>3</sup>.

## **Urban Design**

- Lack of an identifiable center for the West End neighborhood. Dupont Circle functions as a real community center, but Washington Circle doesn't. Explore how to create a more defined center at Washington Circle.
- The West End is surrounded by “destinations”; *e.g.* GWU, Georgetown, the Central Business District. Do residents want the West End to be a “destination” or a residential neighborhood wherein planning and amenities are focused on residents rather than visitors?
- A follow-on session on urban design is in order, including the possibility of residents and stakeholders going out and evaluating places and spaces in very specific ways. Urban design guidelines are needed to get the right experience at the street level.
- Density and tradeoffs. What does density mean? Does the neighborhood need or want more big buildings? For example, would adding more population make much difference in providing the support for neighborhood retail, given the retail already provided in Georgetown, Dupont Circle, and other nearby areas?

## **Planning**

- One person raised the point of the value of “activity generators,” commenting on how the loss of movie theaters located in the neighborhood has had a tremendous impact on the quality of spaces and positive street activity, especially at night.
- Should the provision of BID-like services be explored, perhaps as a joint venture of GWU, the Golden Triangle BID, hotels located within the West End, and other stakeholders? (Can community services be provided but not necessarily through a traditional BID funding mechanism?)
- How to get more people involved in this process and to make it less burdensome?

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<sup>3</sup> Arlington and Alexandria recently agreed to high density development in Potomac Yard conditioned on traffic mitigation measures from the outset. Both jurisdictions were very clear that the road network is not capable of expansion or carrying significant increases in traffic, and that high density development would not otherwise be approved. West End/Foggy Bottom has similar issues that need addressing in terms of the capacity of the road network and new development oriented to automobile-based transportation.

- Development of retail plan for the neighborhood if, after further consideration, the community decides that the creation of such a plan is in order.

## **Education**

- Merger of Stevens Elementary and Francis Junior High School. Is an integration team in place and active right now? Stevens Elementary School is scheduled to close at the end of this school year.
- Lifelong learning and adult literacy should be emphasized.

## **Public Safety**

- Homeland security issues, DC FEMS, and Engine Company No. 1;
- Other organizations could be utilized as partners—Washington Parks and People, GW, National Park Service, DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, Cultural Tourism DC, National Park Service;

## **Funding**

- Strongly recommend that officials work with the community to adopt a Sumner School development model approach;
- Obtain grant funding from public and private sources for demonstration projects and programming at Stevens, Francis and the West End Library;
- Better analysis and communication of resources and assets present within the community, possible FBA website expansion;
- Set priorities as a way to shape community benefits discussion, focus funds toward consensus priorities. Look for model projects already in existence.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

ANC 2A and ANC 2B have passed a joint resolution calling for a more formal planning process to be conducted by the Office of Planning, to guide the utilization, combinations, and/or disposition of publicly-owned sites and facilities in the West End. It is worth considering

extending the Community Visioning Process to another level, for more detailed consideration of the questions that remain.

Furthermore, community desires should be prioritized, and forwarded to the ANCs, the Ward 2 Councilmember, the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, the Office of Planning, the Department of Transportation, the Zoning Commission, and the Board of Zoning Adjustment. It is recommended that these priorities guide the provision of community benefits and amenities that arise from future development matters.

## **APPENDIX 1 – LIKES AND NEEDS FOR WEST END/FOGGY BOTTOM**

**COMPILED 3-12-08**

### **LIKES**

#### **People & Place**

- History – presidents lived here
- Federal Presence
- Historic architecture and design of blocks (mews in the middle of blocks)
- Old rowhouse architecture (where it still exists)
- Variety and diversity in the neighborhood – generational, amount and variety of things to do
- Neighborhood anchored by GWU – increases activity on the streets, keeps property values high in certain instances
- Great place compared to other great places in other cities
- The People: non-judgmental, happy, friendly, neighborly. Friends, allies, caring supportive – Makes life so much richer
- Great place to walk
- Proactive citizens association – is a glue/catalyst for meeting people, feeling part of the community, shaping the future; Publication of association page in the FB Current
- International place/international diversity

#### **Nature & Green Space**

- We border on one of the biggest central city parks in the country
- Rock Creek Park — neighborhood borders the Park, its integral to the neighborhood
- Proximity to National Mall
- Can walk to the Reflecting Pool and it's different every day
- Tree cover — natural assets are remarkable for an urban neighborhood
- Potomac River is a few blocks away
- Roosevelt Island (in ward 2 but accessible only from Virginia)<sup>1</sup>
- Great place to walk
- Kennedy Center on the river
- Washington Circle is being renovated-enhanced.
- Wide sidewalks
- Rose Park in adjacent Georgetown

### **Transportation/Mobility/Convenience**

- Living in Foggy Bottom/West End isn't dependent on cars – can walk to work, amenities are close by or a short subway or bus ride away
- Haven't owned a car since 1993
- Can walk to other places (Georgetown, Downtown, Dupont Circle)
- Metro station
- Sidewalks
- Convenience – rely on public transportation rather than driving
- Great place to walk
- Good bus transportation on Penn. Avenue to downtown, museums, Friendship Heights

### **Public Services/Public Safety**

- Existence of a public library in West End
- Having police and fire stations located within the neighborhood
- Hospital services

### **Cultural Amenities**

- Wide variety and strong collection of cultural assets in and around the neighborhood.
- Kennedy Center
- National Academy of Sciences – not just science, music, and art
- Proximity to national museums on the Mall
- Within our own neighborhood the resources are incredible, can attend performances, music every day
- West End Library, classes
- GWU: access to university library, programming, Lisner Auditorium
- Arts Club
- Streetlife – vendors, streetscape, outdoor musicians (all reflect DC's unique culture)

### **Library**

- Convenient location
- Keep open and refurbish
- Library survey provided information. 350 respondents. Performed by West End Library Friends Stakeholders Committee. 80% of people walk to library — Patrons have high incomes, computers and broadband access at home, are older demographic



- Library open in evenings and weekends
- Library is a decent size (if underutilized)

### **George Washington University**

- University is an anchor
- Appreciate the ambience of being around students, lots of activity
- Keeps property values up in some instances
- Access to university library with FBA card
- University increasing effort to communicate with neighbors; added neighborhood website
- FRIENDS of GW group puts out regular publicity
- Residents of Foggy Bottom/West End can audit courses

### **Planning/Zoning**

- Certain parts of the neighborhood have greater federal oversight (Shipstead-Luce Act, Commission on Fine Arts, National Capital Planning Commission)
- Ritz-Carlton PUD put some funding into improvements at Washington Circle

### **Housing**

- Opportunity to leverage the public assets to make a better neighborhood (Library, Fire Station, MPD Special Ops, Stevens School, Francis School, Francis Recreation Center, Washington Circle)

### **Retail**

- Neighborhood just got two drugstores – 24 hour CVS, Walgreens
- Trader Joes

### **Civic Engagement/City Governance**

- Opportunity to leverage the public assets to make a better neighborhood (Library, Fire Station, MPD Special Ops property, Stevens School, Francis School, Francis Recreation Center, Washington Circle)

## **NEEDS**

### **People & Place**

- Sidewalk cafes/informal places for neighbors to meet.
- Neighborhood doesn't have a center. (Is the center of the neighborhood the Metro Station, Trader Joes?)
- Outdoor places for people to meet (also in Nature & Green Space section).
- Too often, big buildings (super-buildings) make for a lousy experience at the street level. How to address this?
- More residential uses. More residents.
- More attractive green spaces to draw people into the area. More eyes = increased safety.

### **Civic Engagement/City Governance**

- Move away from provincial governance. (City-wide, ward, local?)
- Council, Mayor, Executive Branch haven't shown much commitment to civic engagement.
- Superficial policy logic on decisions.
- Emergency/non-transparent decision making.
- Consult ANCs first, before land deals are actually executed.
- Provide analysis/rationale on why deals are needed. Quantify as well as politic.
- Communicate neighborhood resources better, such as community gardens.
- Many people don't know what the Foggy Bottom Association has accomplished (i.e., Columbia Condos including Trader Joes, cultural programs).

### **Cultural Amenities**

- Improvement of West End Library (see separate Library section for more).
- More outdoor life outside of the parks and near/on the streets and sidewalks.
- Focus on and development of our Native American heritage which is very deep and old.
- Movie Theaters are definitely needed. The loss of movie theaters in the West End has demonstrated how much their presence contributed to positive street life and activity, especially at night.

### **Nature & Green Space**

- Need more shade trees. Should there be a separate neighborhood tree conservancy initiative—Capitol Hill has one—independent of the Casey Trees initiative?

- Outdoor places for people to meet.
- Francis campus is a green space/park space that can be better utilized and could be much more attractive and more widely used.
- Dog parks are opportunities for people to meet. (A dog park by Francis could be put on federal land, if property/approval could be acquired.)
- Low impact design for pocket parks, NPS parks.
- People sometimes don't feel comfortable and safe in parks, especially the elderly.
- More/better use of Washington Circle – add wifi capability. A friendlier and more attractive Washington Circle. Redesign of the Circle to accommodate more civic uses.
- Easier access to the Potomac River and Thompson Boat Center.
- Better connections for pedestrians and bikes from Foggy Bottom to Roosevelt Island.
- Park /Community Garden could be created on east side of 23<sup>rd</sup> between O and N Streets (on lackluster federal reservation slivers).
- More tennis courts.
- Beautification of the neighborhood – streetlights, sustainable streetscape elements, and treebox elements that don't compete with trees for resources.
- Legitimate, sustainable, carbon neutral, alternative energy development.

#### **Transportation & Mobility (including sidewalks)**

- Foggy Bottom Metro is one of the busiest but there is no roof over the entrance. (Cost: \$900,000.)
- The sidewalks/walkways need to be more inviting.
- Directional plaques could be inserted into sidewalks (i.e., directions to Kennedy Center).
- Better management of public spaces (design, maintenance).
- Wayfinding signage to direct people to places (such as from the Foggy Bottom Metro to hotels). To/through/around.
- Zipcar location in Foggy Bottom.
- Bike path.
- M Street traffic calming – narrowing of the street. (Or – two way, and wider sidewalks.)
- Better pedestrian environment.
- Pedestrian safety. More street lights where appropriate. More time for pedestrians on crossing signals.
- Don't remove the Whitehurst Freeway.
- Keep Juarez Circle as is.

- Sidewalks – fast repair of loose brick and damages.
- Better cleaning services for outside/public spaces like a BID (Also transportation and mobility).
- Trash/litter.
- Bicycle racks.

### **Public Services**

- Facilities and services for the homeless. Coordinated planning and services.
- Community spaces as part of a public services place (library) with separate entrances so that the building can be open at times beyond when the library is open.
- Would like to have more public facilities, more things to do that will make the neighborhood an even richer place to be and live.
- Francis School and Recreational Center can be better integrated as schools, green spaces, and recreational-public facilities.
- Planning for Stevens Elementary and the grounds, which are a playground and a public place that should be retained as a public asset in the community.
- What to do with the library? A place to be uplifted. Maybe the issue isn't "world class" as much as it is creating a "21<sup>st</sup> Century" library. Books on demand. Internet and wifi access, dispenser of information to people who can't otherwise afford access. But more than books. (Also in Library section.)
- Sidewalks – fast repair of loose brick and damages (Also transportation and mobility).
- Signs at Metro for people to get directions to places—hotels, Georgetown, Library (also transportation and mobility).
- Outdoor reading space/garden at Library.
- Better cleaning services for outside/public spaces like a BID (Also transportation and mobility).
- Trash/litter (Also transportation and mobility).
- Need spaces (incubators) for nonprofit organizations.
- Mix use with public buildings so that public buildings aren't dead zones at off hours.

### **Public Safety**

- Lighting on 2400 block of L St.
- Public restrooms
- More lighting in alleys off L St. (2300 and 2400 blocks)

- Getting around Washington Circle to the Metro station.
- More housing east of Washington Circle.
- More 24x7 life, not just students.
- Need to better exploit triple redundancy of law enforcement departments located in and around the neighborhood (MPD, US Secret Service, US Park Police, GWU UPD).
- Better Pedestrian safety. (See transportation and mobility.)

## **Library**

- Community spaces as part of a public services place (library) with separate entrances so that the community can access meeting spaces apart from the Library, so that these spaces can be used when the library is otherwise closed.
- What to do with the library? A place to be uplifted. Maybe the issue isn't "world class" as much as it is creating a "21<sup>st</sup> Century" library. Books on demand. Internet and wifi access, dispenser of information to people who can't otherwise afford access. But more than books.
- Continuity. Maybe redevelopment isn't the real issue.
- Homelessness is a big issue. Washington Circle, and in and around the Library are the main gathering places for the homeless in West End. How to deal with the issue. Is it enforcement? A matter of the services available. (Also public services, public safety.)
- According to the Library Survey – majority satisfied but if probed more deeply there are issues. Perceptions of safety, cleanliness, the environment, heating. People looking forward to change. Want improvements in the collection, physical plant, café. 15% of survey respondents don't use the library, many said this is because of the high prevalence of homeless people in and around the library.
- Suggested: many conference rooms of different sizes for 20 to 100 people, multipurpose rooms that can accommodate book clubs, discussions, meetings, speakers.
- Provide ongoing cultural and educational amenities, speaker series, etc., to highlight new ideas, beneficial research findings, coaching to change the world from within us.
- Opportunity for partnerships, creative use of the space, programs, shouldn't be hostage to Library budget, funding cycle. Creative partnerships and collaborations to make this happen — ideally classes offered should be free.
- Outdoor reading space/garden (at Library?) – outdoor terraces that surround the library on three sides are not actively utilized due to lack of landscaping and maintenance but advent of wifi makes outdoor reading room highly desirable.

- Maintain meeting spaces. Office spaces for community organizations, ANC, etc.
- Auditorium space for lectures, small neighborhood concerts, meetings, etc.
- Bicycle racks for users (note: they do exist, but up on the platform as you enter the library).
- Allow water to be brought into library events in meeting rooms.
- Allocate specific budget for cleaning and maintenance.
- More CDs, DVDs (such as movies and television episodes).
- Funding for someone to coordinate programs and meeting rooms.
- Would rather spend dollars on operations (not real estate deals).
- If this is about air rights, then profits from property sale should be escrowed for the libraries, not dumped into the General Fund for a one-time benefit that quickly is dissipated in an almost \$10 billion annual city budget.
- West End Library is deficient in many ways, but at the end of the list for rebuilding.
- Maintain parking capability.

#### **George Washington University**

- Can be a source of conflict with neighbors because universities are constantly growing.
- Conflict with the University is only partially about excessive student presence; also over land issues (GW is largest private landowner in DC second only to the Federal Government/80% of holdings non-taxable).
- Low or no cost continuing education programs for seniors (they offer this now to neighbors and alumni).
- More collaboration and access to meeting spaces for community purposes (preferably free of charge).
- Be a partner in dealing with the homeless issue.
- Senior Center.

#### **Housing**

- City parcels could be an opportunity for affordable and workforce housing, for people of middle and lower incomes.
- Workforce housing – people who work for government, etc.
- Don't want the neighborhood to be just for the affluent.
- Reduce government burdens for small business startups and provide contracts for training and creating work opportunities to help people become more economically stable so that

they can maintain housing by being able to pay for housing on a market basis through higher incomes.

### **Retail**

- Want a grocery store with a wide array of prepared foods, like Whole Foods.
- Create a retail plan for the neighborhood.
- There are no Laundromats in the neighborhood.
- Cafeteria (like Sholls) open weekends and holidays, nice décor, environment, for tea, self serve, meals.
- Promote diversity, independent “mom and pop” retailers.
- Not big box, chain retailers.

### **Spiritual**

- More public relations and communications about programs.
- Meeting spaces so that people can provide training and spiritual programs.
- Intergenerational opportunities needed.

## **APPENDIX 2 – MACRO GROUP REPORT ON PUBLIC FACILITIES IN WEST END**

### **COMPILED BY GREG SNYDER, WEST END RESIDENT**

- Community spaces wanted in buildings to provide (a) office space for non-profits to serve the neighborhood community, (b) low-cost spaces for small businesses, business incubation spaces and (c) business centers (such as meeting spaces, support services for copying, mailing, etc.). Also want space for community meetings, public lectures and presentations, spaces for educational programs. Given this variety, various sized spaces needed (offices, auditoriums, classrooms).
- Improved outdoor spaces that are attractive and give people places to meet, thus building community and connections. This can include green spaces (such as Washington Circle, area around Frances School and multiple pocket parks in area) and commercial spaces (such as sidewalk cafes, eateries). Desire for more benches and dedicated dog parks where residents can meet each other. Create places for people to hang out—which may also deter littering and homeless people from dominating public spaces. Create spaces attractive to residents and visitors, not the homeless population. More eyes on the public spaces make them safer for us all.
- Livelier Streets: Sidewalk cafes, retail shops, benches to sit and people-watch. Tree boxes with large shade trees and separate flower/planting boxes make sidewalks more attractive, drawing residents outside their homes.
- Improved pedestrian safety. More time is needed for pedestrians to cross busy/wide streets (K Street, Pennsylvania Avenue, all streets around Washington Circle streets). Better sidewalk lighting needed to improve safety for walkers at night. Sidewalk paving must be safe; brick sidewalks can be unsafe for pedestrians.
- Development should be green/sustainable and “smart.” Partner with profit and non-profit corporations to create “model” buildings, parks, and streetscapes. Buildings could be demonstration projects for green and sustainable practices; private corporations may want to use them as demonstration projects. For example, a lighting manufacturer may install better sidewalk lighting to demonstrate its products and a builder may put up a building (or improve an existing one) in a “green” way; use that building for community meetings, etc.
- Desire for more residential housing to encourage more lively streets and more 24-hour activity on streets. More residents will support more retail shops.
- Additional parking for visitors. As more retail develops, more parking is needed since some visitors will drive. Not everyone uses Metro.



- Public agencies that own real estate should lease the real estate rather than sell to private parties. Use rent revenue to establish funding stream to support community services (such as subsidizing low-cost office space for non-profit organizations, maintenance of green spaces, etc.). Rent revenues should go into trust funds to support community—not into the DC general fund. Don't sell off our public real estate.
- Use the Sumner School project as a model for development.
- Better serve the area's homeless population. Give them options other than being in the library, pocket parks and other public spaces. Partner with GWU and local churches to provide them needed services. Examples could include the GWU medical/dental, gerontology and social work students serving the homeless.
- Provide shelters in case of disaster (such as 9/11) given our proximity to White House and other federal institutions.

## **APPENDIX 3 – MICRO GROUP REPORT ON PUBLIC FACILITIES IN WEST END**

**COMPILED BY JOY HOWELL, FOGGY BOTTOM RESIDENT.**

### **Overarching Principles:**

1. Everything should be as “green” and green as possible.
2. We need moderate income housing, especially after losing the Tiverton affordable housing rental building on Square 37.
3. Publicly-owned properties are very valuable, and utilization of these properties by for-profit entities should fund not only new facilities but programs in those facilities (Sumner School as an example).
4. We would like to see a white paper on the benefits of leasing the property to a developer compared to selling it outright. After consideration of such an analysis, residents and stakeholders will be better prepared and able to take a position on the possible disposition of publicly-owned assets located within the neighborhood.
5. All public facilities should stay public.
6. Get the best return on public assets for the neighborhood.
7. Homeless should have day care and night care somewhere in Ward 2, **homeless mitigation on Square 37 is absolutely essential.**
8. Through a focused and prioritized community benefits process, developers should provide endowments/trusts to maintain and fund public aspects that may otherwise be displaced, e.g., the library.

### **Stevens Elementary School**

#### **Agency Stakeholders: DC Public Schools, Deputy Mayor of Planning and Economic Development**

Stevens was built as a school for freed slaves in 1868, according to one participant, and has distinguished alumni, is a designated historic landmark and a prime piece of land. One person suggested putting the library at Stevens, but objections to this suggestion were that the building is not accessible to the disabled, requires expensive renovations, and has too many levels to be a library. The community should have input into the building’s future use and wants transparency in the planning for it. The first right of refusal goes to the charter schools by law, then it reverts to the Office of Planning who will decide whether to surplus it or not.

**Key Points:**

1. Stevens needs an attractive streetscape and should have more green streetscape.
2. The property is very valuable and if sold the proceeds should be used to fund facilities and programs in the neighborhood.
3. If not used for educational purposes, the community wants input.
4. If used for housing, use for a combination of homeless and affordable housing – perhaps 1/3 homeless and 2/3 affordable.

**Washington Circle**

**Agency Stakeholders: National Park Service, National Capital Planning Commission**

National Park Service is about to rehab the circle, and it is important for resident concerns to be communicated to NPS so that they can be addressed before the plans are finalized and construction commences.

**Key Points:**

1. Get Wifi on the circle.
2. Have game tables, monopoly, chess, checkers, etc and also try to have cyber game tables, perhaps the World Bank could develop the software/hardware.
3. National Park Service is currently refurbishing, they plan to take the hedges out.
4. Make it more of a place to gather, use it for book reviews, small concerts, explore having a movie screen installed.
5. Talk to the NPS about a refreshment kiosk, sidewalk café.
6. Put hopscotch or something like it in the pavement stones for kids.
7. Have more pedestrian friendly crosswalks.
8. Explore putting in a fountain.

**Francis School, Recreation Center, Field and Pool**

**Agency Stakeholders: DC Public Schools, DC Dept. of Parks and Recreation**

Stevens School is about to be closed, and the elementary students are to be directed to Francis School, which will be converted into a K-8 school facility. Francis is a valuable resource to the neighborhood, but not enough people know about its community garden, playing field and pool, we need more communication to the neighborhood.

1. Uses are education, recreation and community gardens.
2. \$5 parking is about to be available to public, using the parking lot at Francis during off hours, subsidized by the restaurants on P Street.
3. Francis is becoming K-8<sup>th</sup> grade school. Make sure that the facility can accommodate the physical needs of children of vastly different ages (five year old kindergarten students have different needs and must be accommodated differently from 14 year old eighth graders, etc.).

Key Points:

1. Dog Park should be formalized.
2. Community garden should stay and be improved.
3. Public facilities should stay public – soccer park well-used, pool well used by community.
4. Need more communication about Francis so the community is aware of all the features, community groups should feature it on their websites.

**Special Operations Division headquarters**

**Agency Stakeholders: Metropolitan Police Department**

It was announced that Special Ops was moving to another part of the city, not sure what the plan is for it now. When cars come in for meetings, it is congested in terms of parking.

Key Points:

1. It should be moved either over the fire station or out of the area.
2. Ground floor and second floor could be retail, with residential above it.
3. We don't want it to be a homeless shelter.
4. Needs to be middle class housing, not for "people who summer in Provence." Ideally housing could be targeted for people of moderate income, those who make \$50-\$60K a year, younger people, to have more vibrancy in the neighborhood.
5. No corporate apartments, high end housing should not be a priority use for the repurposing of a publicly-owned site in this location, as the neighborhood already possesses a great deal of high-end market rate housing.

### **Engine Company Number 1**

**Agency Stakeholders: DC Fire and Emergency Services, US Department of Homeland Security**

The facility is in serious need of refurbishment, preferably rebuilt. Dupont Circle resident David Mallof gave an extensive report prompting people to favor rebuilding it.

Key Points:

1. No library over the fire station.
2. Workforce housing, perhaps restricted to those who hold security clearances such as policy and fire personnel, due to Homeland Security concerns.
3. Want parking underneath for people who live/work there, again because of security concerns, Oklahoma bombing situation.
4. Should be rebuilt, not just refurbished, seek federal funds.
5. If the Special Operations Division were to remain in the neighborhood, would it make sense to combine the two facilities? Probably not a good idea, arsenal in basement, parking congestion.

### **West End Branch Library**

**Agency Stakeholders: DC Public Library system, Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, Office of Planning**

The November 2007 meeting concerning the Library had a great turnout of concerned residents, people from the neighborhood who care about the library. The overwhelming preference was to see a new library now rather than 7-8 years from now as is currently planned. The library is currently underutilized due to many factors including the large population of the homeless who use the Library or congregate around it. Over 60% of the people who don't use the library said the homeless problem was the reason why.

Key Points:

1. Community needs a center, the library would be natural center if homeless problem can be addressed effectively.
2. Meeting rooms for community groups would be desirable.

3. Lease or sell? Concern about selling our public property, why not follow GWU model and lease it.
4. If sold, money received for the building should be used both for library programs (operations) as well as facilities (capital improvements).
5. Community would like to see a study on lease vs. sell option and then evaluate to take a position.
6. Air rights are valuable, and community is willing to give them up in this location.
7. A green roof for kids to play on would be desirable.
8. Building should be an iconic landmark for the West End.
9. Parking should be available even though most people currently walk to the library, aging population and others may need parking.
10. Should explore whether to have bathrooms with separate outside entrances so people did not have to come in the main entrance to the library.

**Endnote:**

**Roosevelt Island**

**Agency Stakeholders: National Park Service, National Capital Planning Commission**

Very few people are aware that Roosevelt Island, located in the Potomac River, is a part of Ward 2 and wanted to see more use of it and identification of it as part of the neighborhood.

**Key Points:**

1. Roosevelt Island need to be better connected to Foggy Bottom so that access to the Island exists for and from the neighborhood (and the City);
2. The installation of a walking and biking pedestrian bridge would be inexpensive and would accomplish the goal.

**Likes and Needs:**

Pedestrian and bike footbridge (cost \$30,000) from Watergate/Thompson's to Roosevelt Island (and via Roosevelt Island, to Rosslyn)